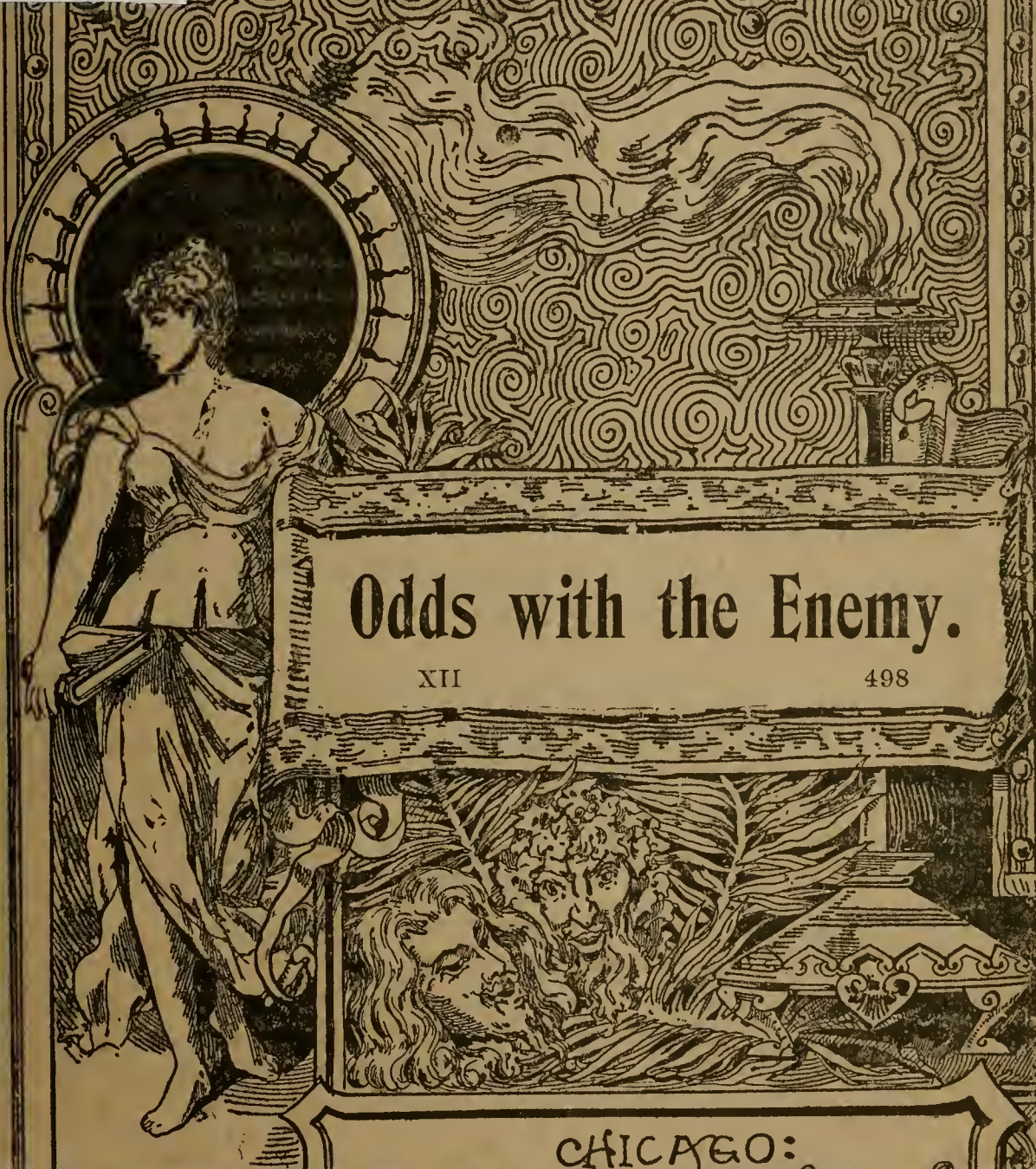


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Odds with the Enemy.

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Breezy Call, 25 min.....	2	1
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Cut off with a Shilling, 25 min.	2	1
Deception, 30 min.....	3	2
Desperate Situation, 25 min....	2	3
Dutchman in Ireland, 20 min.	3	0
Fair Encounter, sketch, 20 m.	0	2
Family Strike, 20 min.....	3	3
Free-Knowledge-ist, 2 acts, 25 min.....	3	3
Friendly Move, sketch, 20 m..	4	0
Hans Von Smash, 30 min.....	4	3
Hard Cider, temperance, 15 m.	4	2
Homœopathy, Irish, 30 min....	5	3
Ici on Parle Francais, 40 m...	4	3
I'll Stay Awhile, 20 min.....	4	0
I'm not Meslff at All, Irish, 25 min.....	3	2
Initiating a Granger, 25 min...	8	0
In the Dark, 25 min.....	4	2

T. S. DENISON, Publisher, 163 Randolph St., Chicago.

Odds with the Enemy

A DRAMA

IN FOUR ACTS

A NEW REVISED EDITION

BY T. S. DENISON

Author of

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CHARACTERS.

MRS. LINTON, a widow in good circumstances,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
OSCAR LINTON, her son,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ALICE LINTON, her daughter,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
HARRY LIST,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
LANTY NIXON, grocer's clerk,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SQUIRE SIMON CARTER, a man of wealth,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
NATHAN CARTER, his nephew, adopted son of Mrs. Linton,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BETSY BLUFF, housemaid, who later becomes Mrs. L.'s companion,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
J. McCLURE HOPKINSON, dry goods clerk,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TABBS, colored servant of the Lintons,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PHŒBE DAY, Squire's servant,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Time of playing, one hour, forty-five minutes.

COSTUMES.

Any ordinary clothing suited to the station of the wearer. Soldiers in uniform. A soldier's coat will answer if complete uniform cannot be had.

R, means right as the actor faces the audience: L, left; C, center.

ODDS WITH THE ENEMY.

ACT I.

SCENE: MRS. LINTON'S *Parlor*. *Room elegantly furnished, giving evidences of wealth and refinement. Pictures on the walls; piano R up near flat; sofa L up in corner; table down L C with chairs. Evening.*

NATHAN. So Alice Linton walks away with that fellow without even excusing herself. I can hardly believe it! To treat in this way one brought up under the same roof, her equal in every respect, and a little better than she is just at present. But her aristocratic notions which she airs so conspicuously will soon be humbled. Nathe Carter, bide your time, and it will all come out right. Humph! She forgets that her father was a spendthrift. A large part of the property which she proudly imagines to be hers will soon be the property of Simon Carter. Then, maybe, his nephew will not be such a bad catch after all. Maybe that will cause her to change her opinion on certain subjects. Confound it! I would like to choke that young List when he comes hanging around Alice with his spoony talk. (*Voices outside.*) Hist! I hear them coming now. I can't face them after my discomfiture. I'd like to know how they do get along together. I'll employ a little stratagem to find out. (*Creeps behind piano, R.*)

ENTER HARRY AND ALICE, *L.*

ALICE. Take a seat, Harry. Take this arm-chair.

HARRY. This will do as well. That is yours.

ALICE. You need not refuse it, Harry. You must take it. You know you are partial to that chair.

HARRY. Yes, I am partial to that chair because it is yours. (*Takes arm-chair, R. of table, ALICE, L.*)

NATHAN. (*Aside.*) Taffy!

ALICE. Harry, don't be foolish. How careless I am! I have not taken mother the evening paper yet. Excuse me till I take it to her.

HARRY. Certainly. (*Exit ALICE, R.*) Always the same. Whenever I hint my love for her, she changes the subject so adroitly I have not courage to renew it. Yet I have the best of reasons for believing that she cares more for me than her careless manner would indicate.

NATHAN. (*Aside.*) Don't be too sure!

HARRY. (*Starting.*) I thought I heard some one. I have not courage to ask the plain question. I dare not contemplate the possibility of a refusal. Perhaps, after all, she cares nothing for me, as her thoughtless raillery would seem to indicate. Would that I could read her thoughts toward me. Humph! Maybe she does n't think of me at all.

ENTER ALICE, *R.*

ALICE. I've kept you waiting longer than I intended, Harry. But then you like that chair and this room so well that I presume you have not missed me much.

HARRY. Indeed I have. You do not know how much I always miss you, Alice, and how lonely I feel when (*pauses*)

ALICE. When you are alone. Ha, ha, what an idea that you should feel lonely when alone.

HARRY. Alice, if you would only listen to me —

ALICE. Now, Mr. Philosopher, if you intend delivering a lecture, please remember that the occasion is somewhat inappropriate, and the audience not sufficient to develop any latent powers of speech-making which you may possess. (*A pause.*) What ails you to-night, anyhow, Harry? You look cross.

HARRY. Sometimes one does not wish to talk on every subject.

ALICE. Quite true, Harry. Let's talk about the war; we must all be interested in that whether we will or not. Did you know nearly all the boys in the village have enlisted under Captain Wilson?

HARRY. Yes; and I wish I could go, too.

ALICE. Oh, don't think of it, Harry. I can't bear the idea of your going to the war.

HARRY. Why?

ALICE. Oh, there would be no one to bring us the latest news, and we should be so lonesome, mother and I. There would be no one to help us while away our leisure hours, which grow more tedious every day. I was just wishing before you came that you would drop in and spend the evening.

HARRY. Here I am, and you have your wish.

ALICE. You have not been here for a whole week. Is that the way for one old playmate to treat another? Harry, I shall have to ask you to explain.

HARRY. You just said you wished to talk about the war.

ALICE. Not when you talk of enlisting. It's horrid. What ever made you think of going?

HARRY. I have several reasons.

ALICE. What are they?

HARRY. In the first place, I think it is my duty to defend my country, and then father does not wish me to see you. For his sake it were better my visits here should cease.

ALICE. Harry, you are always welcome here; mother likes to see you often. Then you know we have the claims of old acquaintance upon you. (*Knocking.*) Who can that be? (*Goes to door, R.*) Betsy, come in.

ENTER BETSY, R.

HARRY. (*Aside.*) I wonder if old acquaintanceship is my only claim here.

BETSY. Good evening, Mr. List.

HARRY. Good evening, Betsy.

ALICE. Take a seat, Betsy.

BETSY. No, thank you. I shall not intrude.

HARRY. No intrusion at all.

ALICE. Nonsense, Betsy! I should think you would know better than to talk about intrusion; sit down. Betsy, you are the same as one of the family, and Harry comes to see the whole family. Isn't that so, Harry?

HARRY. Yes.

TABBS. (*Enters L., aside.*) If dat's a fac', all de family 'cludes me, too.

HARRY. Sit down, Betsy, and we will have a social chat. (*All take seats, BETSY, L.*)

TABBS. (*Aside.*) Dat does n't 'clude dis individual. (*Aloud.*) Miss Alice.

ALICE. Why, when did you come in, Tabbs?

TABBS. Jes' about three-quarters of a moment ago to the bes' of my reclection. Massa Nixon's waitin' at de dooh. (*Betsy jumps up. All rise and look toward door, L.*)

ALICE. Lanty Nixon? Show him in at once. Don't run away, Betsy.

BETSY. I shan't run away, but I'd like to know what he wants here this time of night.

NATHAN. (*Aside.*) I'm in a pretty fix. (*Puts out head.*)

ALICE. He has come to deliver groceries, perhaps.

BETSY. Groceries, indeed! He has been here twice already to-day with groceries.

NATHAN. (*Aside.*) He'll stay all night.

LANTY ENTERS, L, FOLLOWED BY TABBS.

LANTY. Good evening to you all.

ALICE. Come in, Mr. Nixon.

BETSY. Good evening, Lanty.

HARRY. Hello, Nixon! Just back from town?

ALICE. Take a seat, Lanty. We are so glad you have come. Is there any news?

LANTY. Yes, a telegram —

TABBS. Miss Alice, may I listen to the news?

ALICE. Yes, stay and hear it, Tabbs. (*All seated but Tabbs.*)

LANTY. A telegram has just come stating that there has

been another great battle and that the union army is routed with fearful slaughter.

ALICE. I hope it isn't true! (*Calls at door, R.*) Mother, there is bad news.

ENTER MRS. L., *R.*

MRS. L. (*Eagerly.*) What is the news?

LANTY. Union men defeated.

HARRY. It must be a rebel report.

MRS. L. We can only trust in God and hope.

HARRY. And get long-range guns.

MRS. L. What dreadful news! And yet in our impatience we long to hear of battles, and are disappointed if they do not occur almost daily. Who would have thought, a few short years ago, that brothers would so soon deluge our country in blood? And then the bitter end! for when that time comes the victor will only have bruised his weaker brother.

BETSY. Yes, but an erring brother. God's justice is sure, and the verdict of Heaven will be on the side of the right and against wrong and slavery.

HARRY. Nobly spoken, Betsy—

"Truth crushed to earth will rise again;
The eternal years of God are hers;
But error wounded writhes in pain,
And dies among her worshippers."

TABBS. It's mighty nice to talk about de wardic of Heaven. But I'd jes like to know when dat wardic is to be given in. Sposen de jury can't agree and de court journs over two or three times, what will become of all dese fightin' combatifants den? General Jackson! Dey'll all be done killed off before dey eber hear of de wardic.

MRS. L. Have faith, Tabbs. The Lord will fight the battles of the just.

HARRY. But, Mrs. Linton, even the Lord can not fight battles without instruments to carry out his purposes. I feel to-night that everyone who is able to bear arms should take part, and that I should be in the field fighting for my country.

ALICE. You, Harry! Why, how you talk! You know we can not spare you, and there are older hands enough. You are but a boy.

HARRY. Yes, I am a boy, but even boys can help defend their country.

MRS. L. That's right, Harry. Your metal has the true ring. (*Exit, R. Others seated except Tabbs.*)

TABBS. Massa Harry's right. His kind of faith would remove de mountains of Sodom and cast them into de sea of Saharry.

BETSY. Mountains of Sodom! Sea of Sahara! Tabbs, Sodom was a city of the plain, and Sahara is a great desert.

TABBS. Sodom a city of de plain! If dat's de case, why did the Scriptor ask Jacob to flee into de mountains, if dere were no mountains to flee into?

ALICE. That was Lot, Tabbs.

TABBS. 'Spose it was Mr. Lot. A miss in de name don't spile de argument.

LANTY. Stick to it, Tabbs. You have the best of it.

TABBS. Thankee, Massa Nixon. You don't catch dis individual nappin' whar de Scriptor am consarned.

LANTY. Tabbs, are you versed in profane history?

TABBS. Do you spose dis darky waited on Massa two years for nothin', while he was settin' on de flooh of de legislater? Massa Nixon, I'm proud to say dat my limited knowledge of profane history am mostly 'quired by observation durin' dat public career.

ALICE. How very wise you must be, Tabbs, if you have profited by all the experience of your eventful life, public and private.

TABBS. Reckon Massa Linton would have been wealthier and wiser if he had listened to the advice of a sartin person.

ALICE. What do you mean, Tabbs?

TABBS. Well, if Massa hadn't had no dealins with Simon Carter, it would have been better for him. Jes like desc genrous, whole-souled chaps. Dey's so awful maganimous deirselves, dat dey never spect anybody else is mean till it is too late. Mebbe it ain't too late yet to give a little advice though.

ALICE. What do you mean?

TABBS. I reckon if Massa Linton had always put away his papers into a safe place, Missa Linton would have had some big dockiments now.

ALICE. Do you refer to father's private papers which were lost?

TABBS. Yes, Miss Alice. And I also infer to some papers which de late deceased Mr. Linton *did n't* write.

HARRY. Tabbs, drop your big words and tell us plainly what you do mean.

TABBS. Massa Harry, I'se been droppin' big words round like ripe chestnuts arter a frost. Ain't dat a fac'? I mean dat Massa Linton never owed Squire Carter in his life, and dat Massa never give him dem big notes.

LANTY. I've guessed as much for some time.

ALICE. Tabbs, are you aware of the serious nature of the charges you make against my guardian, Simon Carter?

TABBS. Charges! Shan't charge a cent, Miss Alice, for dese facs. But it's all true. Didn't I hear Massa tell Massa Williams, that week before he died, that he didn't owe nobody nothing.

ALICE. Tabbs, you must not let an accidental remark lead you to such serious conclusions. Perhaps father did not know at that time the exact condition of those investments he and Mr. Carter made together.

TABBS. Jes so, Miss Alice. An' no one will ever know de zact condition of dem vestments 'ceptin' Simon Carter, and mebbe his next of kin, Nathe.

LANTY. Tabbs, do you know anything to justify your suspicions?

TABBS. Yes, Massa, I knows considerable more than dis individual's gwine to tell, until the indigencies of de case requiahs de facs.

HARRY. Tabbs, you have nothing but your own suspicions, and those only because you do not like the Carters.

TABBS. Nothing but 'spicions, eh? I see de maligencies of de case requiahs a plain enclosure of de facs.

BETSY. You mean the exigencies of the case require a disclosure of the facts.

TABBS. I said exidigencies. But we will not argy dat point. Here's de facs. Didn't I hear Massa Nathe and his Uncle Simon talking busy about Massa Linton's business?

NATHAN. (*Shows head and shoulders, and shakes fist at Tabbs.*)

TABBS. An when I see dey was so desput in arnest, I stopped on the stairs to listen, if it was sort of mean, an I heerd two mighty mean men layin' plans.

NATHAN. (*Aside.*) (*Business of rage.*)

ALICE. Well, go on, Tabbs.

TABBS. Massa Nathe says to squire, says he, "You know, Uncle, dem papers are taken care of, now how's we gwine to fix up matters?" An Squire Carter says, "We'll jes put in plenty of claims an try to get a mortgage on de farm for de present. Afterwards we can tighten de screws jes as we please if dat gal don't come to a favorable clusion."

LANTY. The villains!

HARRY. Can this be true?

TABBS. True as preaching. (*Exit, R.*)

BETSY. Neither of them is too good for such villainy, in my opinion.

ALICE. Don't be hasty. I can not hear my adopted brother and guardian thus spoken of. Where can Nathan be to-night? It is time he was home.

HARRY. Lanty, that reminds me it is time we were at home, too.

ALICE. No, I didn't mean that. Don't be in a hurry.

HARRY. Really we must go. It is getting late. Good night.

LANTY. Good night. (*Exeunt, L.*)

BETSY. That is a strange story.

ALICE. Do not repeat it, Betsy.

BETSY. I must see to the kitchen for the night. (*Exit, R.*)

ALICE. And I'll go upstairs to mother. (*Exit, R.*)

NATHAN. (*Comes out brushing off dust.*) Aha! They know our plans, do they? All through that black rascal, Tabbs. He shall leave the place. There is always a way to get rid of a spy. Alice herself does n't believe him. No, she trusts me still. So much the better. Tabbs is easily disposed of, and then we shall see who wins, Harry List or I.

ENTER MRS. L. AT R.

MRS. L. You here, Nathan?

NATHAN. Yes, I was looking for a book I left somewhere. (*Exit, L.*)

MRS. L. Oh, this continual trouble! Since my husband's death, there has been nothing but worry over his affairs. Claim follows claim, until I fear nothing will be left. (*Knocking heard.*) Who is that? (*Goes to the door, L.*)

ENTER TABBS, L., SHOWING IN SIMON CARTER.

SQUIRE. How are you, Mrs. Linton? I hope you are well.

MRS. L. I'm quite well, thank you. Take a seat.

SQUIRE. (*Takes chair by table.*) Fine day for the soldiers to say good-bye.

MRS. L. Why, have they gone?

SQUIRE. Yes. One company from Afton. Lintonville boys may go soon. There was a terrible bluster down among the cabins on the creek. Women and children crying. The men were half-crying, too. Should n't think they would care a great deal, as they do n't leave much behind.

MRS. L. They leave their wives and children behind, and nothing should be dearer to men than these. Those who have experienced such partings best know how bitter they are.

SQUIRE. Very true. It is natural to feel such things. We are *all* human when it comes to that.

TABBS. (*Adjusting window curtain. Aside.*) Do n't know about dat.

MRS. L. This cruel war will bring sorrow to many hearts that have never known a care. Is there no better way than bloodshed to settle differences of opinion?

SQUIRE. Differences of opinion may be honest, yet irreconcilable. So the sword must decide. But I've come to see you on a little matter of business. I want to see what can be done toward settling up my accounts with your husband's estate. You know I have made out my claims entirely from my books, including those old notes.

TABBS. (*Aside.*) Plaguy *old* notes.

MRS. L. Yes, I know you were preparing a statement, and I'll be obliged to trust to the accuracy of your accounts, since my husband's private papers have so unaccountably disappeared.

SQUIRE. Very mysteriously, indeed. Have you no clue to their whereabouts?

MRS. L. None. I have given up the search as hopeless.

SQUIRE. And I, too, think there is little probability of your ever seeing them again.

TABBS. (*Aside.*) Mos' likely you does n't. (*Aloud.*) Dey're gone, sure.

MRS. L. Tabbs, you may go.

SQUIRE. Why, are you here, Tabbs? Go at once. We have private business that must not be heard by everyone.

TABBS. (*Aside, going.*) Not de fust business he didn't want everyone to hear. (*Exit, R.*)

SQUIRE. That nigger acts surly lately. What ails him?

MRS. L. I've seen no change in Tabbs.

SQUIRE. Well, he'd be a little more prompt if he worked for me. Well, as I was saying, I have those matters in good shape at last, and am now ready to settle at once.

MRS. L. If there is a balance in your favor, I fear that I shall not be ready to settle immediately.

SQUIRE. There is quite a balance in my favor.

MRS. L. Mercy me! We shall be homeless yet.

SQUIRE. I am very sorry, Madame, to be obliged to break this unpleasant news to you. But I am not able to lose the money, and, though administrator of the estate, I must present my claims with the other creditors.

MRS. L. You do but your duty in claiming your own. I will pay you every cent, if my child and myself are left penniless.

SQUIRE. It will not be so bad as that.

MRS. L. What does the estate owe you?

SQUIRE. A small amount comparatively; only some seven thousand dollars.

MRS. L. A very large amount, considering our other debts. Then my husband was deeply involved?

SQUIRE. He was. He lost heavily in oil speculations. The bulk of my claim is for money loaned at that time. Without my help he would probably have been bankrupt then.

MRS. L. What settlement can we make without sacrificing everything?

SQUIRE. Oh, take your time. Give me a mortgage on the real estate, and pay it off at your leisure.

MRS. L. 'Tis the last resort, but better than to sell it to strangers. I will give you the mortgage, and trust to Providence for the means of paying it off.

SQUIRE. I'll not be hard at all, and then, maybe, some

of those old investments will pan out all right. Now, since we have settled up that business satisfactorily, there's another little affair I'd like to mention.

MRS. L. What is that?

SQUIRE. You know my nephew, Nathan, is very fond of Alice.

MRS. L. It would be very strange if he were not, for their relations have always been those of brother and sister.

SQUIRE. Pshaw! There is no brotherly love about it. It is all the real thing. He wants to marry the girl. He will some day have all my property, and will be well-to-do in the world. As for his bringing up, you know what that is. They would make a splendid match.

MRS. L. To be properly mated, young people must love each other, and I doubt if Alice entertains any other feeling for Nathan than that of a sister's love.

SQUIRE. There is a great deal of moonshine about the loves of young people. When I wanted to marry Matilda Williams, I just went and asked her father about it, and he said yes. The girl said something about not loving me as well as she should love a husband. I told her love would come in time, and her father said the same. We were married, and we always got along without any trouble. If I do say it myself, I never knew a quieter, more obedient wife.

MRS. L. I don't doubt her *obedience*, Mr. Carter, not in the least, but I do doubt the propriety of such marriages. Alice is too young to think of marrying yet. When she is of proper age, she shall choose for herself. I shall not attempt to dictate to her upon the subject of marriage. A mother's advice is all I have to offer, and if I were offering anyone advice now, it would be for Nathan to give up all hope of ever winning Alice, for I am sure her heart is already another's.

SQUIRE. You mean Harry List, I suppose? And can you consent for one of your family's most bitter enemies to marry your only child? Do you not fear the old feud will stand in the way of their happiness?

MRS. L. That feud was a senseless, causeless quarrel, which I hope will be forever consigned to oblivion by its youngest representatives.

SQUIRE. Mrs. Linton, I am astonished to hear you speak so. You hope this for the furtherance of a love match between those representatives, eh?

MRS. L. Mr. Carter, I beg you will not misunderstand me in a way which reflects so decidedly upon my candor, and implies an intrigue upon my part. Of all things I despise hypocrisy and intrigue. (*Rises, indignantly.*)

SQUIRE. (*Rises, embarrassed.*) Oh, as to that, I beg pardon, Mrs. Linton. I did n't mean to reflect; never thought

of such a thing. But you can see that the consequences of such a union might prove disastrous. Could you not influence Alice to regard Nathan more favorably?

MRS. L. I will never advise her to marry a man she does not love.

SQUIRE. That is your decision, then?

MRS. L. It is.

SQUIRE. Very well. I like people to decide such things in a plain, outspoken way. I can respect such decisions as that, but you have made a mistake. (*Going.*) Good evening, Mrs. Linton.

MRS. L. Good night, Mr. Carter. (*Exit, R.*)

SQUIRE. (*Passing out, L., as MRS. L. passes out, R.*) She may come down yet from her pedestal of pride. Ay, to beg my favor on her knees. (*Met at door by NATHAN, who enters.*)

NATHAN. Well, Uncle, what success?

SQUIRE. (*Re-entering.*) Curse it, no success at all. That girl does n't care a straw for you. But I did succeed, too. The mortgage is all right, and that will bring both mother and daughter to terms.

NATHAN. Uncle, it looks pretty hard to defraud helpless women in that way. I would like to have the girl and her property if they could be had honorably, but I almost wish we had never begun to work by unfair means.

SQUIRE. Bah! Don't turn coward and indulge in conscientious scruples now, when it is too late.

NATHAN. You may well say *conscientious* scruples, for what we have begun is certainly wrong. It would be base ingratitude in me to betray those who have been my best friends.

SQUIRE. Nonsense, Nathan! It will be all right when the property is yours and the girl your wife; can't she enjoy it, and can't her mother share it, too, for that matter? "Stratagem is fair in love and in war." It will all be in the family still.

NATHAN. I hadn't thought of it in that light before. Maybe all will be well in the end. I hope it will, since we are into the ugly business. But, did you know that Tabbs suspects us?

SQUIRE. What! How did he find that out?

NATHAN. Overheard our conversation. He has already told Alice, but she does not believe him.

SQUIRE. He must be disposed of.

NATHAN. But how?

SQUIRE. Trust me for that. I'll find some way.

NATHAN. Hush, Uncle! We must not remain here talking. We may be overheard again.

SQUIRE. You are right. I must go at once. (*Exeunt, L.*)

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE: *Same as Act I. Time, a few days later. Discovered ALICE LINTON and NATHAN CARTER.*

ALICE. Nathan, why do you insist? My only answer can be *no*.

NATHAN. Hear me out, Alice. Do all our years of friendship not speak for me?

ALICE. But friendship is not love. No, it can never be.

NATHAN. May I not hope?

ALICE. It is best not to hope where hope is vain.

NATHAN. You harden your heart against me.

ALICE. I have not hardened my heart towards you, Nathan. I will speak plainly. I love another.

NATHAN. I knew it.

ALICE. I love you with a sister's love, and you can not know how it pains me to answer you thus, knowing as I do what misery that answer will cost you. Nathan, for your own sake and mine, never mention this subject to me again, for we never can be aught to each other but brother and sister.

NATHAN. Stop! (*ALICE exit, R.*) I am decided. Fair means will not win. Fate makes me a villain. (*Follows, R.*)

ENTER BETSY, *R.*, MEETING NATHAN.

BETSY. Mr. Nathan looks decidedly blue to-day. I know what's the matter, though. He has been declaring his love for Alice Linton again, and has got another refusal for his pains. What stupid idiots men are! They can't take a hint. Some of them will hanker around and ask half a dozen times if a woman refuses them. Others will keep coming and coming but never have courage enough to ask a plain question. I have no patience with either sort, and Lanty Nixon is one of the latter. Why doesn't he speak his mind? Goodness knows he has chances enough! If he doesn't soon make his intentions known I'll just bestow a little attention somewhere else. Lanty is jealous of that crack-brained fop who signs himself J. McClure Hopkinson. Well, *he is* too nice for this world. I don't care, though. He *can* be agreeable. (*Knocking heard.*) Who's there? (*Goes to door, L.*) Come in, Lanty.

LANTY. Betsy — I mean Miss Bluff — I have called in to tell Mrs. Linton I left the groceries at the kitchen door.

BETSY. Very well; I will call Mrs. Linton.

LANTY. No, it's unnecessary, Miss Bluff. I'll tell you what I brought. (*Approaches closely.*) There was ten pounds —

BETSY. You need not get so close, Lanty. I'm not hard of hearing.

LANTY. No, but you see I am responsible for these groceries, and I'm going to see that they are all properly inventoried by some responsible person.

BETSY. What do you mean by responsible person?

LANTY. See here, Betsy, I'm in a hurry; so, if you please, we will not go into an argument. There were ten pounds of coffee, one codfish (not one of the aristocracy, either), and fifteen pounds of sugar as sweet as — (*Kisses her.*)

BETSY. (*Slaps him.*) Lanty, you're a fool.

LANTY. Maybe I am, Betsy; but I'm sure of one thing.

BETSY. What is that?

LANTY. I know a good article when I've sampled it.

BETSY. Get out, you good-for-nothing!

LANTY. Betsy, listen a minute. I wish to ask you a question.

BETSY. Oh, do you? (*Aside.*) Going to pop at last. (*Aloud.*) Go on, Lanty, I am listening.

LANTY. Why did you devote yourself to that addlepated Hopkinson, the other night, at Jones' party?

BETSY. Is that any difference to you? Can't I entertain whoever I please without asking you?

LANTY. I suppose you can, if you choose to slight your friends.

BETSY. Slight my friends! Humph! Must I sit and entertain you all the time? You don't seem to appreciate it any too well.

LANTY. You know well enough what that Hopkinson is.

BETSY. What is he?

LANTY. He is nothing but a sniffing, stuck-up counter-hopper.

BETSY. Yes, he is a counter-hopper, but he does not handle cheese and codfish and greasy bacon. Lanty, it is so nice to go a-shopping there, and have him display his goods. (*Coquettishly.*) How charmingly he handles the yard-stick!

LANTY. I'd like to break his head with it.

ENTER TABBS, L.

TABBS. Couldn't do it, Massa Lanty, for didn't Miss Alice read in de Filosomy dat a hollow tube am stronger 'n a solid one. Miss Betsy, here am a card from a gemman below.

BETSY. (*Reads.*) "J. McClure Hopkinson." Show him in, Tabbs. (*Bustle of seeing if she is presentable, etc.*)

ENTER TABBS, FOLLOWED BY J. MC.

J. MC. (*With affected lisp.*) Ah! Good aftehnoon, Miss Bluff. How aw you? I hope you are well.

BETSY. I am quite well, thank you. How are you?

J. MC. Very well, indeed. Good aftehnoon, Mistah Nixon.

LANTY. Good day, Mr. Hopkinson.

BETSY. Take seats, gentlemen. (J. MC. *takes a seat.*)

J. MC. Ah! Yes, thank you; hawdly have time, though.

(SEATED J. MC., *R. C.*; BETSY, *R.*; LANTY, *L.* OF TABLE;
TABBS STANDS, *L.*)

TABBS. (*Aside.*) Golly, he's a stunner, suah!

J. MC. I thought I would call, ah! I did not know—ah—but you might walk down to the depot to see the soldiah boys off this aftehnoon. As I passed here, I thought I would stop. Perhaps we might go togetheh.

BETSY. Nothing would please me better than to accompany you.

J. MC. Ah, indeed! Thank you; aw you ready?

BETSY. I shall be ready in a moment. Excuse me.

J. MC. Certainly; certainly. (BETSY *exit, R.*)

TABBS. (*Aside to LANTY.*) Massa Lanty, your cake am dough for dis evening anyway.

J. MC. Do you think of enlisting, Mistah Nixon.

LANTY. (*Fiercely.*) No, I do not.

J. MC. Beg pardon; I did n't know but you would. Most young men desiah to rush to arms, but for my part I pefeh to stay at home.

TABBS. And rush into arms. Hit's mighty sweet to rush into arms at home. Dis individual is willin to serve his country dat way, too.

LANTY. Patriots of that stripe are as plenty as bad excuses and just as useful. A great many stay at home because they are unwilling to defend the country which protects them.

J. MC. Oh! ah! Did I understand —— (*Indignantly. Both rise. Enter BETSY.*) Ah! aw you ready, Miss Bluff?

BETSY. I am ready. Good afternoon, Mr. Nixon. You will excuse my abrupt departure. Good afternoon.

LANTY. Good afternoon, Miss Bluff. I'm obliged to you for your kindness, but ——

J. MC. Good aftehnoon, Mistah Nixon. (*Exeunt, L.*)

LANTY. Well, that's decidedly cool.

TABBS. If de enemy'd get him dey would put him in de imaginary wid de babboons.

LANTY. Confound the impudent puppy. What a fool I've been! Blind as a bat!

TABBS. Massa Lanty, excuse dis individual in correctin' one little mistake of yours.

LANTY. What is that?

TABBS. Massa Nixon, I'se gwine to state plain facs, and you mus'nt get riled, either.

LANTY. Well, go on; hang it.

TABBS. 'Stead of Massa Hopkinson's been a puppy it was Massa Nixon. Why? 'Case Massa Nixon's eyes was n't opened.

LANTY. Shut up, you black rascal. (*Kicks him as he escapes, R.*)

ENTER MRS. L. AND ALICE, R.

MRS. L. Why, Lanty! What are you doing?

LANTY. Nothing. We were only joking.

TABBS. (*Re-enters.*) What would he do if he was in earnest? I'd jes like to know?

ALICE. Tabbs is always joking, and we never know when you *are* in earnest.

LANTY. For once in my life I shall do something dead in earnest.

ALICE. What is that, Lanty?

LANTY. I shall enlist to-morrow.

MRS. L. Why, you said this morning you were not going to the army.

LANTY. I have changed my mind.

ALICE. Is everybody going to the war? Why do you look so grave? Anything wrong between you and Betsy?

TABBS. Reckon Miss Betsy's grief won't —

LANTY. Tabbs, I can manage my affairs without your assistance.

TABBS. Yes, massa. (*Exit, L.*)

LANTY. I guess there is nothing wrong. I've changed my mind; that's all. (*Exit, L.*)

ALICE. I'm going to speak to Betsy. (*Exit, R.*)

MRS. L. These are, indeed, troublous times. My poor husband's estate is in very bad condition. I fear that we shall have little left. Mr. Carter makes such bad reports as administrator. I have never doubted his honesty, even though ugly rumors were afloat many years ago concerning him. Can Tabbs' story be true? No, I have good reason to believe that my husband's affairs were involved. That mortgage places us in the power of Simon Carter, and his language seemed like a menace. He almost threatened me if I did not consent to Alice's marrying his nephew, Nathan.

ENTER ALICE, R.

ALICE. Mother, have you heard the news?

MRS. L. No, Alice. What is it?

ALICE. George Harley ran away from home last night.

MRS. L. Impossible. It can't be true!

ALICE. But it is true, Mother. Susan Harley has just been here and told Betsy all about it.

MRS. L. Poor boy! Sometime he will repent his folly. Mrs. Harley's grief brings back to me the sad remembrance

of our own poor wanderer, laid to rest in a strange land, your own brother, Oscar.

ALICE. Dear mother, do not call him *lost*. I feel that he is yet alive, and will some day return to us despite his foolish vow.

MRS. L. The evidence of his death and burial is too strong to allow us to cherish such delusive hopes.

ALICE. Oh, mother, don't speak so. You know that I cherish the hope that he is alive yet as dearer than all else.

ENTER TABBS, *L.*

TABBS. (*Aside.*) 'Ceptin' Massa Harry. Beg parding for interruptin' de felicities of dis occasion, but —

ALICE. Tabbs, will you never learn to stop your high-flown gibberish? Leave us. Our conversation is private.

TABBS. Private! Dat's what de cruitin officer wanted me to be. Dis chile prefers to be 'scused from private life jes now.

ALICE. Tabbs, leave this room instantly.

MRS. L. Alice, Tabbs does not deserve rebuke. His genial good nature has often sent a ray of sunshine through this house when all around was gloomy.

TABBS. (*Grins.*) Dat's right!

ALICE. Well, what do you want?

TABBS. Your pardon, Missa, but de gemman, Massa Harry, is done tired waitin'.

MRS. L. Is Harry at the door? Show him in at once, Tabbs.

ALICE. Tabbs never will learn how to announce company.

TABBS RETIRES, *L.*, RE-ENTERS, BOWING IN HARRY LIST.

HARRY. Good morning, ladies.

MRS. L. Good morning, Harry.

ALICE. Harry, I'm so glad that you have come. We have been making arrangements for a picnic for Captain Wilson's Company next Thursday, and we shall need you to help get things ready. Take a seat, Harry, till I tell you all about it. (*All seated, HARRY, L. of table, MRS. L. and ALICE, R.*)

HARRY. I have another engagement for that day, which will prevent me from assisting you. I suspect Captain Wilson's Company will dine out that day.

ALICE. An engagement which will prevent you from assisting! The Company will dine out! Of course they will — in the open air. None of your jokes, Harry.

HARRY. I'm not joking. I was never more in earnest in my life.

ALICE. What do you mean, Harry?

HARRY. I've enlisted.

MRS. L. }
ALICE. } Enlisted!

HARRY. Yes; I have enrolled my name in Captain Wilson's Company. To-day I shall put on the blue for three years, or during the war.

ALICE. Oh, Harry, how could you! We never can endure to lose you, perhaps forever. Oh, the cruelty of war!

MRS. L. Be calm, my child, Harry is yet safe. We must trust to God to preserve him. Harry, this is sudden. Have you your father's consent? Why have you resolved so suddenly to leave a comfortable home and brave the dangers of the battlefield?

HARRY. This morning father asked me again to cease my visits here. I refused. He said I had gone over to the enemy. We had words. I told him that his objections were founded upon prejudices which should have been forgotten long ago, and that I respected his wishes but could not admit his right to choose for me. In a violent passion he ordered me to obey him or leave his house and nevermore call myself his son. Now, I wish to say to you something which I had long hoped to say under more auspicious circumstances and with father's approval. Mrs. Linton, I love Alice dearly. I ask you to let her be my wife, if I am fortunate enough ever to return from the army alive. Her answer I have guessed already. Alice, have I guessed right?

ALICE. Yes, dear Harry, yes.

MRS. L. Harry, you are both young. Alice is too young to think of plighting her faith to anyone for years. And then our future is so uncertain. Her father's affairs are yet unsettled—we may have plenty; we may be left in want. The old feud between your kindred and Alice's can you ever forget?

HARRY. I remember it as a thing which should be forever banished out of sight.

MRS. L. Have you considered the consequences of this estrangement from your father? Is it wise to bring into such close relations those whom years of enmity may sunder?

HARRY. It were better than to blight two lives with grudges in which they had no part.

MRS. L. True, my brave boy, but there is plenty of time. When you return from the battlefield crowned with honors, as I know you must, if God spares you, Alice shall decide.

HARRY. God bless you, Mrs. Linton. If the foeman spares me I shall return to claim Alice as my bride.

ALICE. Oh, Harry, you *will* return safe.

HARRY. Yes, dear! But time presses. The company starts at three.

ALICE. (*Very grave.*) Oh, so soon?

HARRY. Yes; it's a short parting. Good-bye.

ALICE. And we don't see you any more? Oh, Harry —

HARRY. I may get a furlough in a year!

ALICE. Oh, dear.

HARRY. (*Taking her hands.*) Good-bye!

ALICE. Oh, Harry, I can't say good-bye that way.

MRS. L. Bear up, dear, as a soldier's sweetheart.

HARRY. I'll be a general yet.

ALICE. (*Laughing.*) The idea!

MRS. L. (*Taking his hand.*) Dear Harry, God be with you.

HARRY. He will be with my country. (*Drawing ALICE to him, kisses her. She clings to him convulsively a moment. He kisses MRS. L., and hurriedly goes, L.*) Adieu!

MRS. L. Good-bye.

ALICE. Farewell, Harry. (*HARRY exit, waving adieu with right hand. ALICE falls on mother's shoulder and weeps silently.*)

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE: MRS. L. seated by a table sewing. Room poorly furnished. Evidences of great poverty. Three years have elapsed between Act II. and III.

KNOCKING. MRS. L. OPENS DOOR, L. SQUIRE CARTER APPEARS.

MRS. L. Simon Carter!

SQUIRE. Good morning, Mrs. Linton. I hope you are well.

MRS. L. You hope I am well! You who have blighted a once happy household. Dare you speak the word hope?

SQUIRE. Mrs. Linton, I have not come here to call up the bitter things of the past. Let us forget them.

MRS. L. You taunt me with my wrongs when you speak of the past.

SQUIRE. I am not here to speak of what might have been but of what may yet be.

MRS. L. What can you have to say to me? Why do you presume to enter this house? Poor as it is it has never been contaminated by the presence of such as Simon Carter.

SQUIRE. Mrs. Linton, we have been enemies, but let enmity listen to reason. May you not have judged too severely? Your late husband's property passed to his creditors, of whom I was the principal one. Your homestead became mine under a mortgage which you gave willingly and of which you admitted the justice. You and your daughter have hardened your hearts against me and my

nephew, Nathan, who once was called your son. It is for him I have come to speak. Whatever slights I may have endured are forgotten. *He* has always been your friend. He would again be your son and more than a brother to Alice. Will you accept a reconciliation?

MRS. L. And is this your mission? Our interview is ended.

SQUIRE. Then you prefer poverty to comfort?

MRS. L. Ay, a thousand times better poverty than one penny of your hated wealth or this degrading alliance. (*Turns away.*)

SQUIRE. (*Aside.*) Unyielding as adamant. Our title is unsafe, and the boys may come home any day. (*Aloud.*) Mrs. Linton, I have been talking to-day with Mr. List about this house. You know it is so close to my property that it really detracts from the value of my residence quite materially. I believe *you* thought it an eye-sore when you occupied the Linton Mansion. If we must be enemies more than a stone's throw should separate us.

MRS. L. And you wish Mr. List to turn us out of the house, and pull it down, do you?

SQUIRE. I have only to say the word.

MRS. L. Mr. List, though my enemy, is too honorable to persecute the helpless.

SQUIRE. Humph! He has no choice in the matter.

Mrs. L. You are strong and I am weak, but in the sense of duty done, and in the approval of a conscience at peace with its possessor, there is a bulwark of safety which your guilty soul has never known, Simon Carter.

SQUIRE. I never knew a conscience which could shelter its possessor from wind or rain. You know Mr. List?

MRS. L. Yes, I *do* know Mr. List as the lifelong enemy of our family, yet I shall appeal to his sense of justice.

SQUIRE. We will see about that. In the meantime consider the proposition I have made. Nathan will talk the matter over with Alice. Good day, Mrs. Linton. (*Exit, L.*)

MRS. L. Have our persecutions begun anew? Why is Simon Carter so anxious that Nathan should marry Alice? They have our property. What more can they want? I fear they have some other dreadful scheme to put into execution.

ENTER BETSY, R.

MRS. L. Betsy, is it not time for Alice to return?

BETSY. Yes, and I saw her coming down the road with Nathan Carter.

ALICE. (*Entering, followed by NATHAN.*) *Never, NEVER* will I be your wife, and I never want to see your face again.

NATHAN. Ah! Good morning, mother. Good morning, Miss Bluff.

MRS. L. Nathan Carter, you will please not call me mother. Once I fondly hoped you would fill the place of my own lost son. But the bitter wrongs which we have suffered at the hands of you and yours forbid that we should ever be aught to each other again but —

NATHAN. Enemies. Let me say a word in self-defence.

MRS. L. Cruel injustice has been done and no defence can change a wrong to right.

NATHAN. No, very true. You may have had wrongs, and you will admit that we also had rights.

MRS. L. Strange rights that will turn helpless women from their homes destitute.

NATHAN. Mrs. Linton, have we claimed more than our own? Was not your husband's property justly forfeited to his creditors? Did we not agree for a penny?

BETSY. For the last penny.

MRS. L. I do not complain of the payment but only of the manner of payment. Why was our homestead ruthlessly sold at such a sacrifice as ruined us? Why were we not given a little time until friends could have aided us?

NATHAN. The mortgage was due and you failed to raise the money to release it. Uncle was pressed for means. What else could he do? But those things are done and can not be undone. Let us remember only the happy days when I was one of you. Perhaps the future can make some reparation.

MRS. L. Say no more. I know of what you would speak. You can make no reparation.

NATHAN. I can place you in the enjoyment of plenty, if Alice will only be my wife.

ALICE. I hate you.

MRS. L. Your wife, indeed! Can you ask a woman to become the wife of one who has wronged her so deeply? We are poor, but we will never redeem our own with the price of honor.

NATHAN. Wherein is the dishonor if she weds one who has long loved her ardently and devotedly?

MRS. L. And whom she despises from the very depths of her heart. Nathan Carter, if this is your only mission here you will oblige us by taking your leave at once.

NATHAN. (*To Alice.*) Is this your answer, then?

ALICE. You have heard your answer. If there is one spark of manhood in you leave this house at once and never desecrate it again with your hateful presence.

NATHAN. (*Turns.*) You need n't be so spiteful. I'll win yet. (*To ALICE.*) So you stubbornly persist in your foolish course. Then if want humbles your pride you can not lay the blame upon me. Heaven is my witness that I have tried to help you. Mrs. Linton, Alice secured her situation as teacher in the village school through my influence. That

favor has not been appreciated, and I can bestow it in more grateful hands. Adieu, ladies, until we meet again. (*Exit, L.*)

MRS. L. Until we meet again! When will our pursuers rest satisfied in their persecution!

BETSY. Their race will be run sometime. "It is a long lane that has no turning." I don't see any turning for us yet, unless it is where it turns to the poor-house.

MRS. L. Betsy, I employed you first as a servant. You soon became more — a friend and adviser. Go, help yourself. I don't ask you to share our poverty.

BETSY. Nonsense! I'll go and get supper. (*Exit, R.*)

MRS. L. Ever ready for the call of duty, true to us in prosperity, and more than a friend in adversity. Her presence is a reminder that generosity and fidelity yet linger on earth.

ALICE. Mother, why does Nathan Carter persist in annoying me with his unmanly attentions? Is the man a lunatic? I hate the very name of Carter.

MRS. L. My darling child, the Carters have some new purpose to work out. What it may be time alone will tell. Simon Carter was here this afternoon, and asked me, as he did once years ago, to use my influence with you in favor of Nathan. Like the nephew, he made fair promises. When I spurned with indignation his base proposal, he threatened us with further persecutions.

ALICE. Simon Carter was here, too! Then Nathan did not meet me by chance this afternoon as he pretended.

MRS. L. No, he placed himself in your way and persisted in following you here contrary to your wishes as a part of their plot. I can not even guess their purpose. Our future is ominous. May Heaven protect us, for we know that Simon Carter is a dangerous man when determined upon evil.

ALICE. All we can do is to wait and work. Mother, we can not neglect the duties of the present to speculate about the future. (*Exit, R.*)

MRS. L. Oh, this bitter, pinching poverty! How I used to wonder that people could ever become so helplessly, hopelessly poor. God knows I realize it now as I never could when I was the petted child of a rich and indulgent father or the idolized wife of a noble, generous husband, whose means afforded him the opportunity to indulge my slightest wish. Truly, our reverses have been swift and remorseless. Only four short years ago we were in a beautiful home, surrounded by every comfort, and now we drain the very dregs of poverty's bitter cup, friendless and penniless.

ENTER BETSY, R.

BETSY. Mrs. Linton, George Harley has just come home

from the army, and Captain Wilson has been up seeing the Squire and Pettifog, the Squire's lawyer.

MRS. L. Harry and Lanty will soon be home, too, I suppose, as the war is over. Perhaps George brings some news of them.

BETSY. None! Susan says he has never seen either of them, nor heard from them since he left home.

MRS. L. Alas! Others' sons may return, but mine is gone, never to return. Even he whom I hoped to call my son, by his silence, is dead to us. Betsy, can we not hope that Lanty may be to us again what he once was? I can not believe that everyone has deserted us.

BETSY. Whatever Lanty may be to us, if he should return, I do not deserve that he should fill the place that he once filled. I drove him to enlist by an inconsiderate flirtation.

MRS. L. Is that the only reason for his silence?

BETSY. I know of no other reason.

MRS. L. Did you say that Captain Wilson was at Squire Carter's? He could tell us something of Harry and Lanty.

BETSY. Yes, if he chose. But, in my opinion, you would get precious little information out of him. You remember that Squire Carter said his influence might be felt even in the army.

MRS. L. I remember that.

BETSY. Captain Wilson is that influence. He is the cat's-paw of Simon Carter. They are up to something now, or that compound of meanness and deceit, Pettifog, would not be there. Susan says that Jim Black, Squire's hired man, overheard Mr. Pettifog say: "An ugly business if that nigger should turn up." Of course that nigger is Tabbs. I always believed that Tabbs's story about the forgeries of Simon Carter was true. I am more than ever convinced of its truth since the chief witness against Tabbs has said that he believed Tabbs never stole the horse which he was accused of taking.

MRS. L. Of course he never did. The horse had only strayed. Tabbs's story may be true. True or false, it matters little to us now. But would Squire Carter dare to carry a personal grudge so far?

BETSY. Dare! These are times when men dare do anything without fear of punishment. Squire Carter knew that there would be plenty to back him in that. Think of poor Tabbs ordered by a mob to leave the country after a mock trial, and glad to get away alive, too. All because Squire Carter was afraid he might tell the truth in regard to some things which he preferred to remain secret.

MRS. L. Suppose Tabbs should venture to return, which is not at all probable, I don't see how he could aid us or hurt Simon Carter in the least.

BETSY. I don't see either; but lawyers don't say such things without some reason.

MRS. L. Did Susan hear anything further from Jim about the conversation?

BETSY. No; only that they were talking about letters, and, as he passed by the window, he saw on the table some papers which they seemed to be talking about.

KNOCKING HEARD, *L.* A BOY DELIVERS A LETTER TO BETSY, WHO GOES TO THE DOOR.

MRS. L. A letter for Alice. (*Calls Alice, who enters, R.*) Alice, here is a letter a boy has just brought for you.

ALICE. Why, who can have written to me; can it be from Harry? (*Takes letter.*) No; it has no postmark, and the word "present." (*Tears it open. Reads aloud.*)

LINTONVILLE, April 20, 1865.

Miss Alice Linton:

For some time past the Directors of this district have considered the advisability of employing some one else to teach our school. We are satisfied that a change is now necessary. Your successor will take charge of the school next Monday. Very truly yours,

Simon Carter, Clerk of Board.

P. S. I have bought the house in which you live. You must move on the first of May. S. Carter.

ALICE. The last blow has fallen!

MRS. L. No, not the last. Their vengeance will follow us.

ALICE. Oh, the wretches! Can't something be done? If Harry were here!

MRS. L. Harry has evidently forgotten us; then why should we remember him? His coming would bring no joy to our hearts.

ALICE. I'll not believe him false till I have heard his story. I will hope on till he tells me from his own lips that he wishes to be released.

MRS. L. Your hope is delusive. We are, indeed, forsaken by all who could render assistance in an hour of need.

ALICE. Not by all. Heaven watches over the distressed, and will some day avenge the wrongs of the innocent.

BETSY. Well, we have our hands and the wide world to make a living in, if that's any consolation. Help will come from some quarter. "The darkest hour is just before the dawning."

TABLEAUX. ALICE SUPPORTING HER MOTHER, *C.*; BETSY, *up R.*, REGARDING THEM SILENTLY.

CURTAIN.

ACT IV.

A few days have elapsed between Acts III. and IV.

SCENE: *Table, C. Shabby furniture, same as in Act III.*
Seated MRS. L., R., ALICE. L. of table, sewing.

KNOCKING, *L.* BETSY GOES TO DOOR.

BETSY. Why, Phœbe Day! Come in. (*Enter PHŒBE.*)

PHŒBE. Good morning, Mrs. Linton. Good morning, Miss Alice.

MRS. L. Good morning, Phœbe. Take a seat, Phœbe. We seldom see you now. Have you, too, forgotten old friends and the days when you found a place at our hearth? (*PHŒBE remains standing.*)

PHŒBE. No, I have not forgotten you, Mrs. Linton. The thought of you and your trials has cost me many a sleepless night, many a bitter tear of regret. Mrs. Linton, I never shall forget your kindness to me. Oh! that I had been more worthy of it.

MRS. L. Why do you speak of unworthiness, Phœbe? I always found you faithful in all things.

PHŒBE. We all have our faults, and I have mine. I have not always done right.

BETSY. Pshaw! You were always a good girl, Phœbe.

PHŒBE. No, no! I have been an ungrateful wretch.

MRS. L. What do you mean, Phœbe?

PHŒBE. Mrs. Linton, you could only hate me if I told you.

SQUIRE CARTER RUSHES IN, *L.* HEARS PHŒBE.

SQUIRE. Only hate you if you told! Girl, have you been babbling? Have you? If you have you will pay dearly for it. Go home. You know you are not allowed to visit here.

MRS. L. It is you, Simon Carter, who are forbidden to come here.

SQUIRE. By whom?

MRS. L. By the usages of society and the dictates of self-respect which would forbid a *gentleman's* entering where he knows his presence is disagreeable. After the wrongs you have inflicted on me, how dare you enter my house?

SQUIRE. Save yourself further hard words. It is not pleasant for me to be obliged to enter your house. I am here only to bring home a disobedient servant.

BETSY. And hear what she would say to us. But we know enough about you already to consign you to a felon's cell.

SQUIRE. Know what? What did you say? Girl, have

you betrayed me? Have you? Come with me at once.
(*Seizes her. She screams for help.*)

BETSY. Coward, do you dare lay hands on a woman?
(*Hits him with broom.*)

PHŒBE. Save me, save me! I never will go with him again. He will kill me.

SQUIRE. Come on (*Drags her forward*), your tongue will learn by-and-by to stop its wagging, or I'm mistaken.

ENTER J. MC., L.

J. MC. Well, really, ah! Do you want any help, Mistah Carter? Is she crazy, ah?

SQUIRE. Help! Crazy! No, you lunatic. I can manage her myself. She has just run away from her work. That's all.

BETSY. Save her, Mr. Hopkinson, from the hands of Squire Carter. She has dared to assert her right to do as she pleases and he threatens revenge.

MRS. L. Mr. Hopkinson, protect us from Simon Carter, for he fears that we may learn the secrets of his villainy. Phœbe is no longer safe in his hands.

J. MC. I am astonished, ah! Squiah Carter a villain! Squiah, this is a free country. Maybe you had better keep your hands off this young lady.

SQUIRE. Mr. Hopkinson, I'm slandered, basely slandered. I am merely claiming my just rights.

BETSY. Rights! What rights have you over this girl? Mr. Hopkinson, please protect us, and I will be forever grateful.

J. MC. Well, it is weally a pleasure to hear you say so. I will serve you most willingly. I beg, pardon, Miss Bluff, but I believe the last time we met you preferred to have some one else as a protector.

BETSY. I was just joking then, and did not mean to slight you, Mr. Hopkinson. You know we shall always be good friends.

J. MC. Only *friends*! Is that all? I would rather we were enemies than such friends.

SQUIRE. Deuce take your palaver. Phœbe, come with me. (*Advances towards her.*)

J. MC. I weally cawn't allow you to take this young lady with my consent.

SQUIRE. I shan't ask your consent, or anybody else's. (*Advances.*)

J. MC. Look here, Squiah. It is exceedingly unpleasant for me to be obliged to hurt your feelings, ah, but I shall have to do so unless you modify your demands a little. The fact is you cawn't take this girl until she is willing to go.

SQUIRE. Mr. Hopkinson, it seems to me you are unreasonable. But we have always been on good terms and I don't

wish to quarrel with a friend about a trifle. I will just wait here until the girl is ready to go.

MRS. L. Mr. Carter, Phœbe shall remain here till she has finished her visit and wishes to go.

SQUIRE. Fool! This is my house!

MRS. L. (*Spiritedly.*) Not till the first of next month, if you please, Mr. Carter. You may prolong your visit if you insist on it. But I hope you will excuse Alice and myself from entertaining you. Phœbe, come to the kitchen, and we will have a chat. (*Exeunt* MRS. L., ALICE and PHŒBE, R.)

SQUIRE. (*Aside.*) I suppose I'll have to go without her. I'll keep a close watch on this house, though. (*Exit, L.*)

J. MC. Squiah Carter seems determinèd to have his own way in this village—to run things, in fact.

BETSY. Yes, and he is not very particular about the means he employs to run them, either. He has succeeded in getting possession of all Mrs. Linton's property, and now he dares to come here to this poor place to exercise his authority.

J. MC. This is a poor place. Miss Bluff, I should think you would get tired of staying here. There caw n't be much inducement for remaining, ah.

BETSY. No, not much. (*Aside.*) And very little for leaving.

J. MC. Miss Bluff, you aw sacrificing yourself by toiling here this way. You aw actually *giving* Mrs. Linton your services. 'Pon my veracity you aw.

BETSY. Mr. Hopkinson, I am not sacrificing myself by serving those who befriended *me* when *I* needed assistance.

J. MC. But you see, Miss Bluff, Mrs. Linton has no use for a companion as she once did when she could afford it.

BETSY. I owe all that I am to her.

J. MC. Ah! Debt of gratitude. But, really, Miss Bluff, would you not like, ah, to take charge of a house of your own?

BETSY. No, I believe not. I think it would be trouble enough to *help* take charge of one.

J. MC. Oh! I meant to *help*. Of course you could not do it all. Miss Bluff, will you be my bwide? I offah you my hand and heart. I admiah you so much.

BETSY. *Admire* me, do you! Just as you do a new neck-tie or the latest style of coat, I suppose. When I marry a man I want one who *loves* me.

J. MC. Weally, Miss Bluff, I *love* you. You know I meant that at first. Will that be sufficient?

BETSY. Mr. Hopkinson, I don't love you. I can not even *admire* you. I can respect you, and that is all.

J. MC. Is that all? Well, that is not as bad as it might be. Couldn't we get along with respect? Some married folks do not have even *that*.

BETSY. Mr. Hopkinson, I don't think I shall ever marry. My mind is made up. Such a union as you speak of would lead to a life of misery.

J. MC. Could n't you change your mind, Miss Bluff?

BETSY. Not without some reasons, and I don't see any reasons just now.

J. MC. If your mind is made up I shan't insist. Well, I suppose a girl is not to blame if she does n't like a fellah. (*Aside.*) 'Pon honoh, I believe some other fellah is to blame. Miss Bluff, I presume you aw very busy to-day, so I will bid you good aftehnoon.

BETSY. Good day, Mr. Hopkinson. (*Exit J. Mc., L.*) Plague take the dunce; he might have guessed how matters stood. Maybe I am a bigger dunce than he is after all. I sent Lanty Nixon away in fun and he left in earnest. Now Hopkinson is gone. I guess I'm too particular. "Wit, money, and manners" don't often go together. What's the odds now! It's decided, anyway.

ENTER MRS. L., PHŒBE, AND ALICE, R.

MRS. L. Is it for "better or worse?"

BETSY. No.

MRS. L. Are you acting wisely, Betsy? Offers do not come every day.

BETSY. Wisely or unwisely, I'd rather die an old maid than be tied to that booby for life.

MRS. L. You may change your mind in a few more years. Phœbe, I think I have guessed the cause of your despondency. Are you thinking of "What might have been?"

PHŒBE. I, am thinking of what might have been if I had not fallen, miserably fallen.

MRS. L. Phœbe, you surprise me. What is the matter? What have you done?

PHŒBE. I have wronged you so deeply that no repentance can atone for the crime. Your suspicions in regard to your property are correct. The Carters' claims were based on forgery and falsehood. Mr. Linton never owed them a dollar. You have been basely defrauded, and I have been the means of enabling them to execute their criminal purposes.

MRS. L. Oh, Phœbe! Have you done this? And we have known you so long and trusted you! It is terrible. What have you done to aid them?

PHŒBE. I have been their accomplice. I took the missing papers. Simon Carter forced me to do it. I deserve to suffer for my guilt. Oh, that I could atone for my crime by some act of reparation in your behalf! I would walk through fire to serve you. Simon Carter may find to his sorrow that a despised servant can wield a power which he does not dream of.

MRS. L. Deluded girl! Are you mad?

PHŒBE. I am telling the truth.

MRS. L. And you betrayed us?

PHŒBE. Yes! Curse me if you choose.

MRS. L. Curse you? This is terrible!

PHŒBE. I'll save you yet, miserable coward that I am! It is not too late yet. They are both away to-day, and now is an opportunity which may not come soon again. I'll try it.

MRS. L. What do you mean, Phœbe? (*Exit PHŒBE hastily, L.*)

ALICE. I believe the girl is crazy.

MRS. L. It is the lunacy of remorse. Her story is too probable to admit of any doubt. And what a tale of villainy it is. Theft! *Falsehood!* What I took for a lack of mercy in selling our property proves to be a lack of honesty. And the man whom Mr. Linton trusted so implicitly is capable of robbing his benefactor's wife and child!

BETSY. I always despised the whole set, anyway, for I believed they were not trustworthy. (*Enter SIMON CARTER unnoticed.*) The evidence is complete, and Simon Carter is a consummate villain.

SQUIRE. Villain, eh? Who dares say villain? Have a care how you blacken my character. I thought you knew me, Mrs. Linton?

MRS. L. I thought so, too, Simon Carter, but I find I was mistaken, for each day adds something to my knowledge of you and your lawless transactions.

SQUIRE. There is one thing you have not learned yet, and that is the extent of my power. Tempt me no further.

MRS. L. (*With scorn.*) *Tempt you!* You have done your work only too well. Years ago people called you a villain. My husband and I disbelieved them because we thought you a persecuted man. You took advantage of his generosity to cheat him shamefully. Not content with your ill-gotten booty, you set yourself to rob his helpless family. You who were legally their protector. To accomplish your dark deeds you alienated our friends and strove to blacken our fair name. You stole the patrimony which you were sworn to protect. *Ay, stole it!*

SQUIRE. Mrs. Linton, you may yet repent these hasty words. You may be called upon to prove your assertions.

MRS. L. Repent my words! Never! No words can portray the depths of your infamy! Dare you ask for proofs? They shall be produced. Simon Carter, I know at last from an eye-witness the secret of your cunning plot. Where are my husband's lost papers? Who has seen them since you forced them from the trembling hands of a servant? Dare you answer that?

SQUIRE. Mrs. Linton, this is all very fine, but it is mere

assertion. I suppose that trembling servant is Phœbe Day, who has been filling your ears with slander when she should have been at home at work. That's easily settled.

MRS. L. Base wretch, begone! You have succeeded so far, but you can not subdue a will determined to oppose you to the last. You may *crush*, but you can not *conquer*.

SQUIRE. Who will believe a tattling servant? I shall not leave this house until you allow Phœbe to go with me.

MRS. L. Until Phœbe goes! She has already gone.

BETSY. I'd just like to see the man who could talk to me in that way.

SQUIRE. Mrs. Linton, where is that girl? I believe you are plotting mischief and have her concealed somewhere.

ALICE. We have told you she went home some time ago. Miserable man!

MRS. L. My child, leave that to me.

ENTER PHŒBE, *L.*, EXCITEDLY.

PHŒBE. I have the missing papers.

SQUIRE. What's that? Ah, you traitor, here again? I'll take care of you and the papers, too. (*Seizes her. She breaks away.*)

ENTER NATHAN HASTILY, *L.*

NATHAN. Uncle, the soldiers are home, and Harry and Lanty are on the way here now. Tabbs is with them and has told them all.

SQUIRE. Humph! Is that all?

MRS. L. At last! Thank God.

ALICE. Where are they?

BETSY. When did they come?

NATHAN. Uncle, be quick. They are almost here.

SQUIRE. Silence, boy. I have a little job here.

NATHAN. Well, I can't be responsible for your safety.

SQUIRE. Pooh! They dare not lay hands on me. I have the law on my side and they have not a line to prove Tabbs' story. Let them come. Now, girl! (*Advances towards PHŒBE. She screams.*)

ENTER HARRY, LANTY, AND TABBS, *L.*

HARRY. Alice! (*Embraces her.*)

ALICE. Harry!

TABBS. We's jes in force, a-comin' like de bugs on de cucumber vines.

MRS. L. God bless you, Harry. Back again, safe; and Tabbs, faithful old servant. (*Shake hands.*)

BETSY. (*Rushes to LANTY.*) Why, Lanty! The same old Lanty Nixon.

LANTY. (*Clasps her waist. Kisses her.*) Yes, the same

Lanty, and not very old yet. And I infer from your demonstrations that you are still Betsy Bluff.

BETSY. Yes.

ENTER, *L.*, OSCAR LINTON, INTRODUCED BY HARRY.

HARRY. Mrs. Linton, Colonel Oscar Linton.

MRS. L. Oscar Linton! (*Pause.*) My long lost son! (*Clasps him in her arms.*)

OSCAR. Yes, a prodigal son! Heaven forgive him. Alice, the little pet of my boyhood. (*They embrace.*)

ALICE. Oscar! Dear brother, Oscar! I always thought you would return to us.

TABBS. Wish dis individual could jump into somebody's arms for two or three moments. But den de filosomer says man often hugs a collusion. Golly! I kind o' think all huggin' is a collusion, anyway.

OSCAR. And Betsy Bluff, too, whom I have often led through the deep snow drifts on our way to school. (*Shake hands.*)

NATHAN. Brother Oscar, will you not recognize me?

OSCAR. Do not call me brother. You never were my brother. Tabbs has told us all. We'll settle accounts later.

SQUIRE. We'll be with you. Come, Nathan. Girl (*turning to PHŒBE*), will you go?

PHŒBE. Never!

OSCAR. What! Phœbe, our old servant! (*Shake hands.*)

PHŒBE. Yes, Master Oscar, I am Phœbe. Heaven be praised that you are spared to come back again to shield the helpless.

SQUIRE. Be careful what you say, girl. You have learned your place, I think. (*Exeunt SQUIRE and NATHAN, L.*)

MRS. L. My darling boy, this is a joy unspeakable. But why have you never written in all these years? Seven long years have passed since the report of your death. Why have you been silent when a word would have changed a mother's grief into joy?

OSCAR. I have not been silent. I suppose you heard of the fatal accident in the mine, when my comrade, Jerry White, was killed and several others fatally injured. But I wrote the particulars to prevent anxiety at home, for I knew you would hear of the accident through Jerry's friends. How they ever got me among the killed is more than I can tell, unless it was because I left immediately for other diggings. I could not bear to stay where poor Jerry was killed.

MRS. L. Your letter never came. Why did you not write again?

OSCAR. I received no answer, and my pride construed silence as an intentional slight. I left for California at bitter enmity with my father because I imagined he cared

more for Nathan than for me. We quareled, and I vowed I would never return until the family needed my services.

ALICE. Tell us how you happen to come back with Harry and Lanty, in an officer's uniform.

OSCAR. That is soon told. When the war broke out I received a commission as second lieutenant, and have been promoted step by step to a colonelcy. I learned by accident a few months since that there was a Captain List in a regiment encamped near us.

ALICE. A Captain List! But I asked about Harry.

LANTY. Well, Captain Harry List then.

ALICE. What! You a Captain, Harry?

TABBS. Dat am a fac. Dis wah's gwine to hatch out a drefful sight of capens and ginerals. Dis individual will be a gineral too if he was n't in de wah. He's not Tabbs any more. Jes call him, if you please, Adjutant Sutler.

LANTY. I thought you were only assistant barber where we found you, Tabbs.

TABBS. See heah, Massa Nixon, when a gemman has done got up in the world I think it is mighty small business to cast up to him the misfortunate occurences of his poorer days.

MRS. L. Tabbs, you have not got up very high in the world when you return to us. We have reached the bottom of the scale.

TABBS. Massa Oscar will make dat scale tilt pretty lively t'other way some of these days, I tell you.

HARRY. Things have changed since we left, and we never heard of your distress. Why didn't you write to us? We could have helped you.

ALICE. I concluded you would write to us when you wished to hear from us.

HARRY. I did write repeatedly. And you never got my letters?

ALICE. None after you left for the seat of war.

HARRY. I wrote several. Receiving no reply I feared that my letters were lost in the mails, and wrote at different times until I was forced to conclude that for some reason you wished to consider our engagement broken.

ALICE. How strange, that all our letters were lost?

OSCAR. That may not be very strange after all. Who was your first Captain, Harry?

HARRY. Captain Wilson.

OSCAR. And Captain Wilson was the instrument of Simon Carter's machinations. Probably the Captain could give you some information concerning those letters.

HARRY. I see it all now. Squire Carter's remark about his influence, the day I enlisted, is clear as daylight now.

ENTER SQUIRE CARTER AND NATHAN, L. THEY PAUSE
AT DOOR.

OSCAR. A remark dropped by a brother officer of mine, who was acquainted with the Captain, leads me at once to conclude that your letters never left his tent when delivered there. The Captain is said to have quit the service under suspicious circumstances to avoid a court-martial, owing to various irregularities.

SQUIRE. That is a very pretty story, but it cuts no figure here. Phœbe, will you go with me?

PHŒBE. Never! Save me, Colonel Linton. I can tell you the whole plot.

SQUIRE. I forbid her to speak. (*Steps forward threateningly.*)

OSCAR. (*Steps forward.*) Go on, Phœbe, you are in no danger.

PHŒBE. Simon Carter, I am your slave no longer. I will no longer remain silent when silence would cover up crime. Here are the missing papers. (*Hands them to OSCAR.*) They will fully prove Squire Carter's dishonesty.

SQUIRE. Those documents are stolen from my private papers. They are mine, and I will have them. (*Steps forward threateningly.*)

OSCAR. Stand back! A civil tongue is a knave's best friend.

HARRY. You have to deal with *men* now, instead of women.

PHŒBE. Squire Carter keeps a strong iron box in his library. That box is always carefully locked, and I've thought for a long time that the papers were in it. One day he accidentally left the key to the box on the table. I took an impression of it and had another key made. I couldn't stand the pangs of my conscience at the misery I had caused a bit longer. When he was away to-day I opened the box and found the papers. Mrs. Linton, can you forgive even me?

SQUIRE. That is a theft. I'll have those papers. Oscar Linton, you are an accessory to this theft. You will have to answer to that charge.

OSCAR. So she is a thief, and I am no better. And who has made himself the chief culprit by reaping all the benefits of her crime? Answer that. You are not yet done with this, Simon Carter. You shall suffer the heaviest penalties of the law.

NATHAN. Give back the property, Uncle. We are foiled. Those fatal papers are our ruin.

SQUIRE. Never! Never! They have the law, but I have the money. We'll see who wins. Besides, I can't dispose of the property better than in defending it. Try the law. Ha! ha!

HARRY. You talk of appealing to law! Wretch!

OSCAR. His bluster is only the bravado of a bad man in a bad cause.

ALICE. Can we recover our property?

OSCAR. (*Looks at book and papers.*) This is a pretty clear case.

NATHAN. Yes, your case is clear. My Uncle Simon has committed a great crime. But what is his sin compared with mine? I have turned against those who loved me dearly. I have betrayed a loving mother and an affectionate sister. With the basest ingratitude I have brought to want those who took me, a poor, ragged outcast, and made of the wretched orphan a respectable and intelligent member of society. I have proved a viper in the bosom which cherished me. But, as God is my judge, my crime began because of my love for her whom I hoped to make my honored bride. I loved her passionately, and hoped to make atonement by restoring all in common ownership. May God forgive me. I dare not ask forgiveness of those I have so cruelly wronged.

SQUIRE. Nathan, don't be a fool. I'll fight 'em.

NATHAN. No, Uncle. You can not fight against the right. (*Going, L.*)

ALICE. Poor Nathan! I can forgive him.

MRS. L. Misguided, wretched boy. He is to be pitied.

PHŒBE. Mrs. Linton, dare I ask forgiveness?

MRS. L. Yes, of Him who pardons all who seek Him.

TABBS. (*Aside.*) Wonder if anybody will forgive dis chile for bein' run away for hoss stealin'?

OSCAR. Mother, sister, loved ones all, my heart swells with joy when it feels itself once more entwined by the blessed ties of home.

ALICE. May we ever hold those ties sacred!

HARRY. Comrades of the camp and field, we have survived the hardships of the march, and the dangers of the battlefield. But when we think of our stirring experiences and hairbreadth escapes, may we ever remember that, with silent heroism, faithful ones at home bravely battled for the right while the ODDS WERE WITH THE ENEMY.

MRS. L. OSCAR.

HARRY, ALICE.

BETSY, LANTY.

R., TABBS, PHŒBE.

NATHAN, SQUIRE, *up L.*

SIMON CARTER, *near door, L., looks defiantly at OSCAR and*
MRS. L. NATHAN, *downcast eyes; looks penitent.*

SLOW CURTAIN.

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| Transpositions. | Brother Antonio, (Poem). |
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| Ensign Bearer, The (Patriotic). | Deserter, A |
| Where is My Hat? (Comic). | Edmund Burke, (Oration). |
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| "Awfully Lovely" (Philosophy). | Aunt Doleful's Visit, (Humorous). |
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Too Much of a Good Thing, 50 min.....	3	6
Turn Him Out, 50 min.....	3	3
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Two Gay Deceivers, 25 min....	3	0
Two Gents in a Fix, 20 min. ..	2	0
Two Ghosts in White, 25 min.	0	8
Two Puddifoots, 40 min.....	3	3
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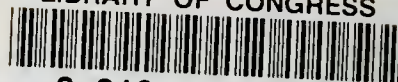
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Joke on Squinim (The). 25 m..	4	2
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No Cure, No Pay, 10 min.....	3	1
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Two Ghosts in White,	-	20 m.	-8
The Assessor,	-	10 m.	3-2
Borrowing Trouble,	-	20 m.	3-5
Country Justice,	-	20 m.	8-
The Pull-Back,	-	20 m.	-6
Hans von Smash,	-	2, 30 m.	4-3
Irish Linen Peddler,	-	2, 40 m.	3-3
Kansas Immigrants,	-	20 m.	5-1
Too Much of Good Thing,	-	45 m.	3-6
Is the Editor In?	-	20 m.	4-2
Pets of Society,	-	20 m.	-7
Wide Enough for Two,	-	45 m.	5-2
Patsy O'Wang,	-	35 m.	4-3
Rejected,	-	40 m.	5-3
A First-Class Hotel,	-	20 m.	4-
Mad. Princeton's Temple of Beauty,	-	20 m.	-6
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